

SECTION I - POLITICAL SITUATION

1. Origin and Development of the Present Political System.

- a. What historical developments directly contributed to the establishment of the present political system?
- b. When, how and why was the present form of government brought into being?

2. Present Governmental Structure.

a. The Constitution.

- (1) When was it written? What foreign constitutional system or systems appear to have influenced its framers? Has it been amended since its adoption? Etc.

(If the country has no constitution in the US, British, or French sense of the term, or if the existing constitution has been set aside by the present government, this situation should be fully canvassed.)

- (2) What provisions does the constitution make for the handling of disagreements concerning its own meaning? (That is, what official or agency has the last word as regards "interpreting" the constitution?)
- (3) What evidence is there as regards the attitude of 1) public opinion in general, 2) the major political, social, and economic groups of the population toward the existing constitution? (i.e., is there general satisfaction with the form of government for which it provides?)
- (4) What levels of government are there (national-central, state-departmental, county, municipal, etc.)? How are they related to one another?

b. Civil Liberties.

- (1) What is their constitutional basis? What provision is made for their enforcement against infringement by 1) the legislature, 2) the executive, 3) the public administration?
- (2) Leaving to one side the constitutional and legal aspects of the civil liberties question, what is the day-to-day situation with regard to

- (a) Freedom of speech (do people freely discuss and criticize the existing regime and its policies in the streets, in restaurants, etc.?)
- (b) Freedom of assembly (are people in fact free to assemble, to stage demonstrations, to petition for redress of grievances, etc.?)
- (c) Freedom to organize (are individual citizens free to form new political parties, pressure organizations, etc., without interference by governmental authority?)
- (d) Freedom of press and propaganda (are individual citizens free to start new newspapers, to issue and circulate pamphlets and leaflets, to buy and use as they see fit time on the radio, etc.?)

c. Public Information and Education.

- (1) Who actually owns and controls the press and radio? Does the handling of the facts regarding domestic and international issues conspicuously reflect the interests and bias of the owners? Is the flow of information, in general, such that private citizens who are prepared to expend time and effort in order to keep themselves well informed are in fact able to do so?
- (2) What are the broad facts concerning the educational level of the population? concerning the country's educational system (including adult education)? concerning illiteracy, and public and private efforts to reduce illiteracy? As matters now stand, what percentages of the nation's youth receive what levels of education? Are matters improving in this regard? What, in general, is the content of the instruction offered?
- (3) Do the country's newspapers and radio stations themselves cover events abroad? If not, what is the incidence of US news agency news? Is it increasing? Who are the major competitors, etc.? What play does TASS get?

d. The Electorate.

- (1) What do the constitution and the electoral laws provide as regards to who may vote? What percentage of the population is thus legally entitled to participate in the electoral process? Who are the groups thus legally excluded? Is there a demand for a broadened franchise?

- (2) Leaving the constitution and the electoral laws to one side, what are the facts with regard to actual participation in elections? What prevents from voting those who are legally entitled to do so but do not (indifference, coercion, inability to get to polling-places on election day, etc.)?
- (3) What are the facts about the actual conduct of elections (guarantees assuring a correct count, etc.)?
- (4) What is the religious complexion of the population? Is there a correlation between religious and political affiliation?
- (5) What is the racial complexion of the population? Is there a correlation between race and political affiliation?
- (6) What is the political, economic, and social status of women? Is there widespread demand for reform in this regard?
- (7) What is the present relation between the leading religious denomination and the state? What is a) the legal and b) the actual situation as regards freedom of conscience?
- (8) Is there a "ruling class" or "ruling group" which, constitutional and legal considerations aside, actually controls the course of public policy? If so, who are they, and how do they work through existing political and legal forms to get their way?

a. The Executive.

- (1) How chosen?
- (2) What is the relation between the executive and the legislature as regards 1) ordinary legislation, 2) the budget, 3) the conduct of foreign policy? (Here again, it may be necessary to distinguish sharply between what the constitution and laws provide and the way the system actually works.)
- (3) Is the cabinet "collectively responsible" in the British sense?
- (4) If there is both a President (or King) and a prime minister, what is the former's position during cabinet crises? (i.e., what role does he play in selecting the new prime minister, and in the negotiations for the necessary support in the legislature?)
- (5) Are there arrangements for dissolution of the legislature and the holding of a new election? If so, how do they work? Recent examples?
- (6) What provision is there for government by decree rather than ordinary legislation? To what extent does the system now

function in terms of broad grants of power to the executive agencies, to be filled in by executive rules, regulations, and orders? To what extent is this filling-in controlled by the legislature?

f. The Legislature.

- (1) Do the results of recent elections (as regards composition of the two houses) appear to indicate that the legislature adequately represents the present electorate? (i.e., Is it a reliable index of effective public opinion out over the country?)
- (2) What are existing arrangements for liaison between the legislature and the executive? How do laws whose enactment is desired by the Government get introduced?
- (3) Does the legislature have a positive impact upon public policy? Have there been recent conflicts between the legislature and the executive? If so, who won?
- (4) What facilities does the legislature have for controlling the day-to-day conduct of the executive? the judiciary? the bureaucracy?

g. The Judiciary.

- (1) How are the judges appointed? What provisions govern their tenure? Are these provisions respected (i.e., Is the judiciary non-political?)?
- (2) How does the administration of justice, both criminal and civil, measure up from the standpoint of US notions regarding due process? What conspicuous departures can you point to from the principle of equality before the law?
- (3) Are the judges, in general, men with adequate legal training?

h. The Bureaucracy.

- (1) Is there a bureaucracy in the US or British or French sense-- i.e., a corps of permanent officials who remain in the administration regardless of how elections go? If so, how are they recruited?
- (2) What posts within the administrative structure are understood to be "political" (and thus change hands when a new government comes to power)?
- (3) What is the economic status of civil servants (i.e., better paid, worse paid than people in other employments requiring the same level of ability)?

3. Political Parties.

- a. What are the political parties which have in recent years been sufficiently large (or important for whatever reason) to affect the course of events?
- b. Describe each of the parties from the standpoint of 1) the economic and social interests they represent, 2) internal organization, 3) avowed program and propaganda appeals, 4) propaganda methods, 5) recruitment methods, 6) degree of control by rank-and-file membership, 7) finances.
- b. What is the content of existing legislation on parties (how they get on the ballot, how they raise funds, etc.)?
- d. Drawing upon experience in recent elections, what are the issues that divide the leading parties?
- e. What parties are growing? what parties losing strength? what are the apparent reasons?

4. Other Influential Groups.

- a. What organized groups (trade unions, professional associations, associations representing businessmen, employers, etc., religious and educational organizations, youth organizations, organizations representing racial segments of the population, political clubs) play an important role in the nation's public life? To what extent do they forward their purposes by a) pressure on the political parties themselves, b) pressure on the Government, c) independent educational and propaganda effects? To what extent are they subject to foreign control or influence?
- b. Do any of these groups favor policies which, if adopted, would be prejudicial to US interests?

5. Current Issues.

- a. What are the main political issues at present? What are the contending parties or interests and what are the probable resolutions?
- b. To what extent do the policies of foreign countries affect the internal politics of the country? If the country lies within the power orbit of one of the Great Powers, what special political problems can be traced to this fact?

NOTE: Communist strength, aims and influence should be discussed under either para. 3 or para. 4 unless issue is of such importance that it requires special treatment.

6. Stability of the Present Administration.

- a. Will the present Government remain in office for a reasonable length of time or will it
- (1) Be peacefully voted out in the next election?
 - (2) Be overwhelmingly defeated in the next election?
 - (3) Maintain its place by force or fraud?
 - (4) Be ousted by a revolution or coup d'etat?
- b. What role, if any, will a foreign power, or powers, play in either supporting or opposing the continuation of the present regime in power?

NOTE: Subject matter treated in paras. 5 b. and 6 b., as well as other matter possibly covered in section on the Political Situation requires careful selection to preclude the unnecessary inclusion of material properly reported on in section on Foreign Relations. Cross references may be useful, but should be kept at a minimum.